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ROCKET HEAT SINGES TWIN SPIRES TURF SPRINT RIVALS

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Friday, May 6, 2016) – Mike Sanchez’s Rocket Heat blasted away from the gate in front and never trailed in posting a two-length victory over Alsviid in the 22nd running of the \$150,000 Twin Spires Turf Sprint Presented by TwinSpires.com (GIII) for 3-year-olds and up.

Trained by Vann Belvoir and ridden by Flavien Prat, Rocket Heat covered the five furlongs on a firm Matt Winn Turf Course in :56.47. It was the first stakes victory for Belvoir and Prat at Churchill Downs.

The victory was worth \$85,560 and increased Rocket Heat’s earnings to \$316,512 with a record of 17-6-5-1. It was the first graded stakes victory for Rocket Heat, a 4-year-old Kentucky-bred son of Latent Heat out of the Slew’s Royalty mare Enjoy the Moment.

Rocket Heat returned \$19.60, \$10 and \$6.80. Alsviid, ridden by Chris Landeros, returned \$10.20 and \$6.20 with defending race champion Power Alert (AUS) finishing 1 ½ lengths back in third under Julien Leparoux and paying \$4 to show.

Summation Time finished another nose back in fourth and was followed in order by Guns Loaded, Something Extra, Mongol Bull, Hootenanny and Speightsong (dead heat for eighth), American Sailor, Weast Hill and Latent Revenge.

TWIN SPIRES TURF SPRINT QUOTES

Flavien Prat (rider of Rocket Heat, winner) – “I had a good trip. I was really happy on the middle of the turn. He relaxed and took a breather. When I asked him, he just took off. He (trainer Vann Belvoir) told me to ride him with confidence. He was pretty confident before the race, so I’m really happy for him. This is my first win at Churchill. I’m really happy about that.”

Vann Belvoir (trainer of Rocket Heat, winner) – “He ran a huge one. When we broke out of the gate good and was able to clear, I was real excited about that. He was displacing so I did a myectomy (cardiac surgery treatment) on him and we were hoping it would help and I was confident that it would and we worked him twice in between races and he worked real well and more so worked him to give him his confidence that he was able to breathe and he has been training a lot more relaxed and not as scared going to the track so I thought it helped him quite a bit. Flavien (Prat) rode him great. He’s got good hands and was able to relax. The only concern that I had at the top of the stretch was him being able to switch leads, sometimes he gets a little hung up on his left lead. When he switched, I thought he might have enough to hold on. We’ll probably go to Pimlico and run in the turf sprint stakes there (\$100,000 Jim McKay Turf Sprint on May 20).”

Chris Landeros (rider of Alsviid, runner-up) – “He’s just a runner. He’s all heart. I really have no excuses. The only thing was we didn’t have enough pressure for that horse up front. I knew that was going to be tough. He gave me everything he had. I have no excuses.”

Chris Hartman (trainer of Alsviid, runner-up) – “You can’t fault him. He brings his ‘A’ game every time.”

Julien Leparoux (rider of Power Alert, third-place finisher) – “He came away from there a little slow. On the inside and going five-eighths, you’ve got to come out sharp. It cost me.”

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